

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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INFO AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

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AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EAID, ETRD

SUBJECT: MEETING OF SIX EUROPEAN DEVELOPMENT MINISTERS

REF: (A) STATE 30869, (B) STOCKHOLM 659

1. EMBASSY OSLO CAN REPORT THE FOLLOWING IN RESPONSE TO QUERIES RAISED IN STATE REFTEL, BUILDING UPON INFORMATION REPORTED BY STOCKHOLM. INFORMATION BELOW DEVELOPED PRIMARILY IN CONVERSATION BETWEEN ECONOMIC COUNSELOR AND MARTIN HUSLID, DIRECTOR GENERAL FOR PLANNING, MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS. ONE OF THE RESULTS OF THE MEETING OF SO-CALLED "LIKE-MINDED COUNTRIES" IN THE HAGUE IN EARLY FEBRUARY WAS AGREEMENT TO SEND MINISTERIAL-LEVEL DELEGATION TO WASHINGTON IN MARCH TO MAKE CONTACT WITH THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION AND TO DISCUSS NORTH-SOUTH ISSUES.

2. LIKE-MINDED GROUP IS MADE OF SMALLER INDUSTRIALIZED COUNTRIES-
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NORWAY, SWEDEN, DENMARK, FINLAND, THE NETHERLANDS, AND BELGIUM (IRELAND JOINED FEBRUARY MEETING)--WHICH GENERALLY TAKE A COMPARATIVELY LIBERAL ATTITUDE TOWARD NORTH-SOUTH ECONOMIC ISSUES. THEY MEET INFORMALLY TWO OR THREE TIMES A YEAR AT THE POLITICAL LEVEL (MINISTERS OF UNDER SECRETARIES) TO DISCUSS UN ECONOMIC QUESTIONS. THEY AVOID OPERATING AS A BLOC AT UN MEETINGS AND COORDINATE WITH OTHER WEO'S, BUT TEND TO SEE

THEMSELVES AS BRIDGE BUILDERS BETWEEN THE DEVELOPING WORLD AND MAJOR WESTERN INDUSTRIAL NATIONS. NORWAY IS A LEADER IN THE LIKE-MINDED GROUP, IS COMMITTED TO THE NEW INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC ORDER (NIEO) AND STRONGLY SUPPORTS ISSUES SUCH AS THE UNCTAD COMMON FUND.

3. HUSLID TOLD US THAT COMPOSITION OF THE DELEGATION WHICH HOPES TO VISIT WASHINGTON HAS YET TO BE AGREED UPON, BUT IT MOST LIKELY WILL INCLUDE A NORWEGIAN AND DUTCH MINISTER OR UNDER SECRETARY LEVEL OFFICIAL, AND PERHAPS ONE OTHER FROM THE GROUP. LIKELY TIMING IS LATE MARCH, AND ONCE COMPOSITION OF DELEGATION AND TIMING ARE AGREED UPON OFFICIAL REQUEST FOR VISIT WILL BE MADE. HUSLID TOOK CARE TO STRESS THAT VISITING REPRESENTATIVES OF LIKE-MINDED COUNTRIES IN NO WAY WISHED TO BE RECEIVED AS SPOKESMEN FOR NEW GROUP WITHIN THE OECD OR A BLOC, BUT RATHER OFFICIALS TRAVELING IN A PERSONAL CAPACITY TO PRESENT VIEWS OF COUNTRIES WHO USUALLY SHARE THE SAME POINTS OF VIEW IN INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC FORA.

4. INTENT OF THE VISIT, HUSLID SAID, IS TO MAKE CONTACT WITH THE NEW ADMINISTRATION AND TO CARRY FORWARD THE DIALOGUE VICE PRESIDENT MONDALE HAD WITH SOME OF THE LARGER INDUSTRIALIZED COUNTRIES DURING HIS RECENT VISIT TO EUROPE AND JAPAN. ACCORDING TO HUSLID, THE LIKE-MINDED GROUP DECIDED ON THE INITIATIVE IN VIEW OF THE CRITICAL IMPORTANCE OF THE U.S. IN NORTH-SOUTH ECONOMIC QUESTIONS, AND BECAUSE THEY TEND TO REPRESENT A DIFFERENT POINT OF VIEW THAN DO THE LARGER COUNTRIES WHICH THE VICE PRESIDENT VISITED. BECAUSE THEIR POSITIONS ARE COMPARATIVELY MORE IN SYMPATHY TO G-77S ON NORTH-SOUTH ECONOMIC ISSUES THAN REST OF GROUP B, HUSLID TELLS US THAT DELEGATION WILL LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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BE SEEKING MORE FLEXIBILITY AND FORTHCOMINGNESS IN U.S. STANCE ON NORTH-SOUTH ISSUES SUCH AS COMMON FUND.

5. WHEN QUERIED ON THE RELATIONSHIP OF THE PROPOSED END OF MARCH VISIT TO WASHINGTON AND THE MONTH-LONG MARCH COMMON FUND MEETING IN GENEVA, HUSLID SAID THE TWO ARE NOT ENTIRELY RELATED. THE LIKE-MINDED COUNTRIES FEEL THAT BROADER ISSUES THAN MERELY THE COMMON FUND COULD USEFULLY BE DISCUSSED IN WASHINGTON. THEY FEEL THAT THE MARCH COMMON FUND MEETINGS ARE ONLY A PART OF THE ENTIRE NORTH-SOUTH DIALOGUE; IN FACT, THEIR INTEREST IS IN DISCUSSING ISSUES IN THE BROAD CONTEXT. ANDERS

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